

# Lois Kolkhorst

## Biography

Rep. Lois W. Kolkhorst is a member of the Texas House of Representatives, serving House District 13, which includes Austin, Grimes, Walker, and Washington Counties. She is responsible for a district spanning over 3,000 square miles, stretching over central Texas, from the pine forests of East Texas to the Coastal Gulf Plains.

As the Chair of the House Committee on Public Health, she helps manage the state's multi-billion dollar health care system and works to set priorities for the Health and Human Services Commission, which oversees thousands of state employees at five state agencies.

As a member of the House Committee on Land and Resource Management, she helps to oversee property rights issues, including the ongoing effort to reform our state's eminent domain laws. She also holds a seat on the powerful Calendars Committee, which determines if and when bills are considered on the House floor for passage.

During her career as a lawmaker, she has fostered positive changes in the state's public schools, colleges and universities. As a long time education advocate, she was honored by the Texas Retired Teacher Association as well as the College of Education at Sam Houston State University. Previously, she spent six years on the House Appropriations Committee, where she chaired the education subcommittee, overseeing funds for public schools, community colleges, universities, and health-related educational institutions.

Kolkhorst has gained accolades for a broad legislative agenda that has had a significant statewide impact. Over the years, she has authored and sponsored a long list of bills, tackling issues as varied as healthcare, criminal justice and prison reforms, education funding, agriculture policies, consumer rights, economic development, community housing issues, and domestic violence legislation. For efforts to control state spending and reduce tax burdens, she received the Defender of the American Dream award from Americans for Prosperity.

Her landmark legislation to improve consumer transparency at colleges and universities was featured in The Wall Street Journal and nationally on Fox News in 2010. She's been listed on the Texas Monthly Magazine roster of Top Ten Best Legislators, and for her work to preserve a strong economy, she's received the Fighter for Free Enterprise award from the Texas Association of Business. As a champion for family issues, she's received the Freedom & Family Award from Texas Eagle Forum.

For supporting the criminal justice system, she has been presented with the AFSCME Legislative Service Award to recognize her work on behalf of correctional officers within the nine prison units in her district. In 2009, she wrote and passed a re-authorization and restructuring of the Texas Department of Public Safety with bipartisan support.

A staunch supporter of property rights, Kolkhorst joined forces with land rights groups and gained national media attention for questioning the proposed Trans-Texas Corridor system of privatized super-highways. She's also written and passed some of the only legislation to address the costs incurred by illegal immigration.

Over the years, Kolkhorst has been recognized by a variety of statewide organizations. She received the Friend of Children Award from The United Way of Texas for her work with early childhood development. The Texas Farm Bureau has recognized her for her support of statewide agriculture and property issues. She was honored as Rural Legislator of the Year by the Association of Rural

Communities in Texas. Additionally, Kolkhorst received the Texas Hospital Advocacy Tribute Award from the Texas Hospital Association and the Friend of Medicine Award from the Texas Medical Association.

Prior to her election in November 2000, she served as CEO for the Washington County Chamber and the Economic Development Foundation of Brenham and she has been a longtime advocate for rural economic development issues. The Texas Travel Industry Association presented her with the 2009 Silver Spur award for her work in promoting Texas tourism. She served terms on the Texas Economic Development Council and the Brazos Valley Workforce Commission. She was also appointed by then-Governor George W. Bush to the One-Call Board of Texas.

A native of Brenham and Washington County, she is a 1988 graduate of Texas Christian University, where she received a BS in Advertising and Public Relations. Upon graduation, she spent eight years with TCU in athletic administration. An accomplished golfer, Kolkhorst served as a four-year letter winner for the TCU Lady Frogs Golf Team and was also named to the Academic All-Southwest Conference Team. Besides the occasional golf game, she enjoys hunting and fishing with her husband, Jim Kolkhorst. They have two children, Lois Kate and Jake. The family lives in Brenham, while they own and operate Kolkhorst Petroleum based in the nearby city of Navasota.

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